

Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma

Philinda Mindler philinda.mindler@cffde.org

Learning Objectives



- **Define** trauma and identify the emotional, behavioral, and physical effects
- **Learn** trauma Informed caregiving strategies to support healing
- **Develop** a plan for self-care and stress management as a caregiver and/or professional

@cffde
 @cffde
 @cffdelaware
 cffde.org
 302-658-5177

What comes to mind

When you think about children who have experienced trauma?



What is Trauma?

A threat or series of threats that overwhelms our nervous system, and impacts our mental, physical, social, emotional and spiritual well-being.

ACUTE | CHRONIC | COMPLEX | HISTORICAL | VICARIOUS

Collective Historical Trauma

Effects of Trauma



EMOTIONAL

- Anxiety
- Fear
- Sadness
- Difficulty trusting



BEHAVIORAL

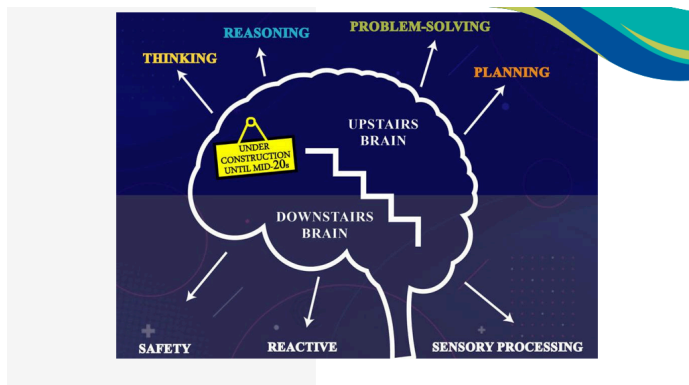
- Aggression
- Withdrawal
- Impulsivity
- Hypervigilance



PHYSICAL

- Headaches
- Stomachaches
- Chronic pain

PTSD/Post Traumatic Stress Disorder- Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a mental health condition that can develop after someone experiences or witnesses a traumatic event. Not everyone who goes through trauma develops PTSD.



The Downstairs Brain in Action

- Almost fully developed at birth
- Intense, quick emotions
- Fight, flight or freeze response
- Need help being soothed



Types of Stress Response

POSITIVE

Brief increases in heart rate, mild elevations in stress hormone levels

TOLERABLE

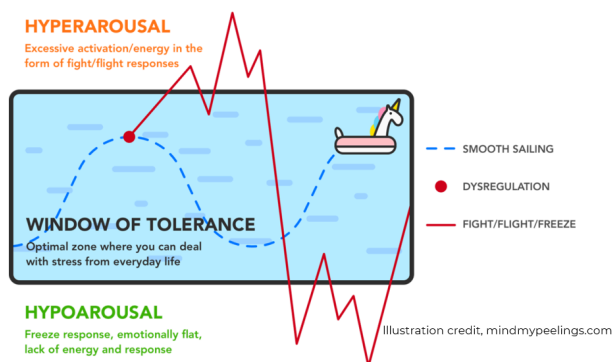
Serious, temporary stress responses buffered by supportive relationships

TOXIC

Prolonged activation of stress responses, absent protective relationships



illustration credit, mindmypeelings.com



Self-Regulation is the Ability to...



Identify and manage emotions



Match arousal & energy to fit the situation



Concentrate & shift attention as appropriate



Engage in social interactions



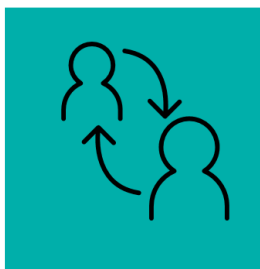
Empathize with the emotions of others

Creating Structure & Routine



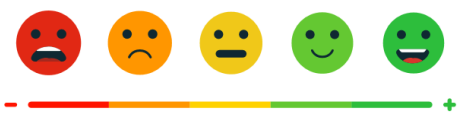
- Routines (with some wiggle room)
- Teach them the plan
- Reminders
- Choices

Engagement

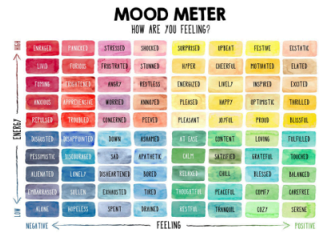
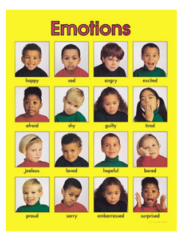


- Understand
- Introduce
- Don't assume

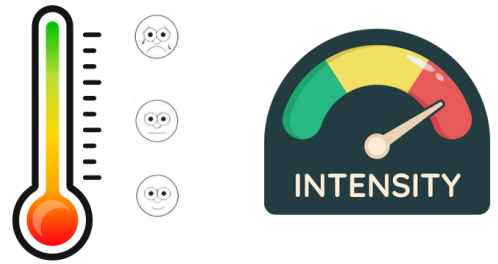
Working on Emotional Regulation



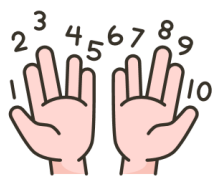
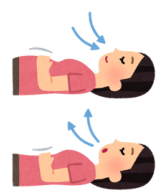
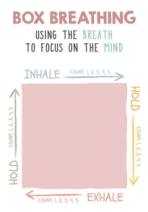
Identifying Feelings



Rating Feelings



Breathing Techniques



Grounding Techniques

5-4-3-2-1
GROUNDING TECHNIQUE

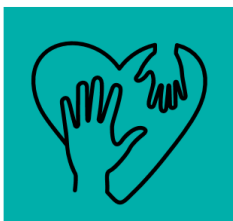
- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can feel
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste



Rythm



Connection & Attachment



- Seen
- Safe
- Soothed
- Secure

Responding to Conflict



REACT versus
RESPOND
DON'T versus **DO**

WAYS TO DEFUSE



1. Regulate

2. Relate

3. Reason

WAYS TO DEFUSE



Relate

"I see what you're feeling, and I acknowledge it. If I were in your shoes, and at your age, I might feel the same way."

WAYS TO DEFUSE

Regulate



WAYS TO DEFUSE



Reason

- "Help me to understand..."
- "Let's figure this out together."

RESPONDING MINDFULLY

- 1. Be Aware
- 2. Pause
- 3. Listen



TAKING CARE OF YOUR OWN EMOTIONAL NEEDS

What messages did you get?
Learning ways to cope

TECHNIQUES TO TRY

SELF-CARE DAILY CHECK-IN

- 1. BREATHE**
TAKE A MOMENT TO BREATHE AND GROUND YOURSELF
- 2. FEEL**
HOW AM I FEELING TODAY?
- 3. GIVE THANKS**
WHAT AM I GRATEFUL FOR TODAY?
- 4. WANT**
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ACCOMPLISH TODAY?
- 5. NEED**
WHAT ARE YOUR NEEDS TODAY?
- 6. AFFIRM**
TAKE A MOMENT TO AFFIRM YOURSELF!



Body Scan



TECHNIQUES TO TRY



Take a walk/ movement



Talk it out

REPAIR

- 1. Acknowledge
- 2. Apologize
- 3. Repair



Resources

For Caregivers

ABC Attachment Biobehavioral Catch-up <https://www.abcparenting.org/>

Strengthening Families and Nurturing Families Program (CFF)

<https://www.cffde.org/positive-parenting>

School-Based Therapeutic Program (CFF) <https://www.cffde.org/trauma-intervention>

Raising Good Humans, Hunter Clarke-Fields <https://mindfulmamamentor.com/blog/>

The 5 Love Languages of Children, Gary Chapman and Ross Campbell

No-Drama Discipline Daniel, Siegel and Tina Payne Bryson

Video: **How to Yell Less** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-OqhzCw5Hg>

What Happened to You Oprah Winfrey and Bruce Perry

The Boy Who was Raised as a Dog, Bruce Perry and Maia Szalavitz

How to Talk so Kids Will Listen & Listen so Kids will Talk, Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish

The Yes Brain, Daniel Siegal and Tina Payne Bryson

Bruce Perry, NMT Seven Slide Series <https://www.youtube.com/@TheChildTraumaAcademyChannel>

For Self-Care

Self Compassion, Dr. Kristin Neff

Free practices from Dr. Neff <https://self-compassion.org/self-compassion-practices/>

Trauma Stewardship, Laura van Demoor Lipsky with Connie Burk

Self Nurture, Alice D. Domar and Henry Dreher

For Kids

How Full is Your Bucket? For Kids, Tom Rath and Mary Reckmeyer

Breathe Like a Bear, Kira Willey

My Body Sends a Signal, Natalia Maguire

Riley the Brave, Jessica Sinarski

Online

National Child Traumatic Stress Network

<https://www.nctsn.org/audiences/families-and-caregivers>

What is Child Trauma Infographic <https://www.nctsn.org/what-is-child-trauma-infographic>

Stress vs. Trauma Infographic

<https://www.nctsn.org/resources/understanding-stress-vs-trauma>